

Introduction

To grow and stay healthy children need to eat a nutritionally well balanced diet. Schools are an influential setting and can contribute significantly to improving the health and wellbeing of pupils.

Good nutrition in childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many children are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables.

Packed lunches can contribute to almost a third of a child's weekly food intake and therefore need to be balanced and nutritious.

Rationale

1. To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the pupils with healthy, safe and nutritious food.
2. Schools are required to positively promote the health and well-being of their pupils. Work around healthy eating is a high priority of the "Every Child Matters agenda".
3. The content of school lunch boxes needs to reflect the requirement of schools to meet minimum food and nutrition standards for school meals.
4. Packed lunches should provide a nutritious, balanced diet to support the child's learning and development.

Aims

- To ensure that packed lunches (brought in from home) reflect the standards for school meals introduced in September 2006.
Please visit www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk for more information
- To encourage a high nutritional quality of packed lunches in schools and healthy eating habits of children at lunchtimes, which can influence life-long health and well-being.
- To further raise the profile and support health and well-being throughout the school.
- To encourage healthy eating habits from an early age and improve the overall nutrition of pupils

Implementation of this policy

- School will provide an appropriate area where pupils who choose to bring packed lunches can eat and where possible, they will be able to sit with those having school dinners.

- A storage area / facilities for packed lunch bags, in the most convenient and appropriate place possible will be provided. However, the school cannot provide cooled storage areas and therefore cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.
- It is the responsibility of the parents / carers to provide an appropriate packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period. Parents are advised to include an ice pack. This will ensure that food items are kept at an ambient temperature reducing the possibility of bacteria developing.
- Drinking water for pupils who request it
- The school will, within reason, send any uneaten packed lunch food items home. The rationale for this is that parents can also monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake with the school.
- Food items which do not comply with the healthy packed lunch policy will be sent home with the child. A note will be included with the food items explaining why they have not been eaten.

Please support your school by not including these items in a packed lunch:

Foods and drinks high in fat and / or sugar

It is important not to fill up on too many foods that are high in fat and / or sugar at the expense of other more nutritious foods.

Limiting high fat and sugar foods will help protect young people from becoming overweight as well as helping prevent tooth decay, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. This is why sweets, chocolate, crisps, cereal bars, fruit bars, toffee/salted popcorn, squash and fizzy drinks are not available in schools.

Guidance

Suggestions for food **to include** in a healthy packed lunch

- At least **one** portion of fruit or vegetables every day *These foods provide vitamins, minerals and fibre.*
- Meat, fish, eggs or other source of non--- dairy protein (eg lentils, beans, soya or hummus) every day (usually as part of a sandwich, wrap, roll or salad)
- Oily fish such as pilchards, tuna or salmon *These foods provide protein for growth*
- A starchy food such as bread, pasta, rice, potatoes or other types of cereals every day
These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy.
- Dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt or *fromage frais* *These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth.*
- A drink – water is best followed by milk (semi---skimmed), unsweetened fresh fruit juice, diluted fresh fruit juice, drinking yoghurt or dairy based smoothies.
- Cereal bars rather than cakes and biscuits
- Fruit, crackers and cheese and vegetables or bread sticks with a dip.

Restricted items

To ensure consistency and to keep packed lunches in line with food standards for school meals, packed lunches should not contain the following:

- Fizzy / highly sugared drinks in cartons, bottles or cans
- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat, sausages/chipolatas/pepperoni sticks, processed cheese based products
- Cakes
- Crisps
- Biscuits, sweets / confectionary
- Chocolate spread/jam as a filling for sandwiches
- Chewing gum
- Energy drinks
- Nuts or nut products because of the danger to other children with allergies
- Hot food – due to the health and safety concerns relating to food poisoning and scalding.

Special Diets

The school recognises that some pupils may require special diets due to **verified medical conditions**. In this case, parents are urged to inform the school and be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible.

For these reasons, children must eat their own and no---one else's packed lunch.

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